

by a murderous and demented totalitarian tyranny such as the Castros' (actions like "attempting to leave the country without permission").

While countless thousands of Cubans suffer in the tyranny's infernal gulag, tourists visit the island's "delights", enjoying the regime's apartheid tourism system and partaking of the child prostitution promoted by the Castros' regime. Heads of State and government, foreign ministers and other "dignitaries" flock to totalitarian Cuba, partaking in the regime's sponsored "delights", and bringing ignominy to the nations they allegedly represent.

But, Madam Speaker, I rise to remind my colleagues of the real Cuba. I rise to remind my colleagues that Omauris Rondon Rivero, and thousands of others who suffer in the Castros' gulag, exist. That they represent the best of the Cuban nation. That they represent the future of Cuba, a free and democratic Cuba. And I rise to demand the immediate and unconditional release of Omauris Rondon Rivero and all the political prisoners in the nightmare that is totalitarian Cuba.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE WORKING FAMILIES' FLEXI- BILITY ACT

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Working Families' Flexibility Act, which will ensure that working Americans can ask their employer for modified schedules so they can balance the demands of their jobs and their home life.

Modeled on successful legislation adopted in the United Kingdom, the legislation would give employees a right to request modification of their hours, schedule, or work location. It would require employers to seriously consider all such requests in a timely manner, and provide an explanation for requests that are denied. The bill also includes job protection for employees who make flexibility requests. Small businesses would be exempt from this bill, and the Department of Labor would be called upon to develop regulations for the flex-time process.

This bill will raise awareness of the rising need for flexible work schedules, and will protect employees who are nervous about requesting a change in schedule. Called the "soft-touch" law in the UK, it would not place undue burden on businesses, it only asks that they evaluate these requests and provide a response explaining their decision, whatever it is. Adopting a flexible workplace has been shown to reduce turnover, which helps employers cut costs and retain valuable employees. In the UK, over 80 percent of requests have been approved and over 80 percent of employers report no adverse effect from the legislation.

AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

We are all painfully aware that our nation is in a deep economic recession. The grim numbers from the Bureau of Labor Statistics begin to tell the story. For months the unemployment rate has been rising and in January nearly 600,000 jobs were lost. This is the highest number of jobs lost in a one-month period since 1974. It is estimated that if joblessness continues at the same rate, unemployment rates will be in the double digits by summer and the highest unemployment level since the Great Depression.

Economists on both sides of the aisle agree that we need swift and robust action to counter this troubling downturn. By making needed investments in areas such as infrastructure, healthcare, and education H.R. 1 will address rising joblessness by creating jobs in areas where investment will make a long-term impact. In my home state of California it is expected that the measure will create or save close to 400,000 jobs.

As a healthcare advocate I am particularly pleased that the bill also provides \$1 billion to restore state and local health department jobs that will be lost in the next year due to budget cuts. Not only will this funding keep thousands of people employed, it will also ensure that the public continues to receive critical prevention and wellness programs that these employees provide. Moreover, it is essential that we ensure the stability of our public health infrastructure which is critical to national and local responses to natural or man-made catastrophes.

I am also gratified that the bill includes funding to address critical health care workforce shortages. At a time when millions of Americans are unemployed, there are well over 140,000 unfilled registered nursing jobs in our hospitals, nursing homes and community health centers. To address this need the bill includes \$500 million for nurse training.

The bill also allows governors to spend up to \$10 billion for school modernization. The funding provided for school renovation and repair is essential to address the nation's crumbling education infrastructure. Our nation's students and teachers deserve to learn and work in buildings that are not crumbling around them.

There is no dispute that economic conditions will get worse before they get better. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is an important step forward in reversing the course of the current recession. It will provide a desperately needed boost to our ailing economy, and will provide American families with a needed social safety net as they weather the worst of this economic crisis.

I urge my colleagues to vote yes to stabilize our economy and assist Americans impacted by this crisis.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. VERN BUCHANAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Mr. BUCHANAN. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on earmarks, I am submitting the following information for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD regarding earmarks I received as part of H.R. 1105, the Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2009:

Requesting Member: Congressman VERN BUCHANAN

Bill Number: H.R. 1105

Account: Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service—SRG

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Florida Citrus Mutual

Address of Requesting Entity: Lakeland, FL 33802

Description of Request: I secured \$1,217,000 for the continuation of vital citrus canker research by the UF-IFAS, through the Cooperative State Research Extension and Education Service (CSREES), to improve technologies for treatment and detection, methods of movement and containment, and means to control and eliminate this devastating citrus disease.

In 2005, USDA-Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS) detected citrus greening in Florida. This is yet another severe citrus disease that must be addressed. USDA-APHIS and ARS are working in conjunction with Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Division of Plant Industry (FDACS-DPI) and UF-IFAS to develop a joint citrus health production plan for an interim period, while the scientific community works to find disease resistance and/or a cure for these diseases. Research efforts will include management of citrus canker and greening to minimize tree mortality and yield loss in a cost effective manner, as well as the economic implications of these diseases in world citrus markets. This joint, coordinated research is not only imperative to Florida citrus, but also important to all U.S. citrus production.

Requesting Member: Congressman VERN BUCHANAN

Bill Number: H.R. 1105

Account: Health Resources and Services (HRSA) Health Facilities and Services

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee

Address of Requesting Entity: 8350 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34243

Description of Request: I secured \$143,000 to address nursing shortages by supporting educational development at the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee Campus

Critical nursing shortages throughout the United States continue to grow as the population ages and the nursing workforce approaches retirement age. The University is in the initial stages of preparing for separate academic accreditation. Once this is achieved, their highest priority will be to establish a College of Nursing on the campus. With a nursing program in place we will be able to reach and educate the southern-most portions of Florida. The funds from this proposal will be spent to support the development of a teaching simulation laboratory (equipment and simulation models) on our campus, for equipping a video-conference classroom, and the development of web, on-site, and blended courses.

Requesting Member: Congressman VERN BUCHANAN

Bill Number: H.R. 1105

Account: STAG Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Project

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Sarasota County

Address of Requesting Entity: 1660 Ringling Boulevard, Sarasota, FL 34236

Description of Request: I secured \$500,000 for the Phillippi Creek Septic System.

Obsolete septic tanks are a source of wastewater pollution in Phillippi Creek, and thus, all of lower Sarasota Bay, along with its estuaries. The Phillippi Creek Septic Tank Replacement Program is underway to replace failing septic systems and connect approximately 15,000 low-income homes and businesses to central sewer in the Phillippi Creek Basin.

Requesting Member: Congressman VERN BUCHANAN

Bill Number: H.R. 1105

Account: Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)—Health Facilities and Services

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Manatee Community College

Address of Requesting Entity: 5840 26th Street West, Bradenton FL 34207

Description of Request: I secured \$95,000 for a Medical Technology and Simulation Center at Manatee Community College (MCC).

Through state and private initiatives over many years, MCC has been able to secure funding to construct a Medical Technology and Simulation Center. What is now needed are resources to outfit the Center with the equipment to operate a functional teaching program and Community Health Clinic. The proposed expansion of MCC's nursing program will accommodate up to 48 new nursing students each year and help provide the community with additional health care services it requires. This investment in classroom and clinical infrastructure will allow the College to immediately expand its program in terms of both student enrollment and reach. Without additional funding the prohibitive costs associated with nursing programs would create an indefinite barrier to the College's ability to meet this community need.

Requesting Member: Congressman VERN BUCHANAN

Bill Number: H.R. 1105

Account: Department of Education—Higher Education

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: New College of Florida

Address of Requesting Entity: 5800 Bay Shore Road, Sarasota, FL 34243

Description of Request: I secured \$95,000 for a Smart Library for New College in my district.

Libraries are no longer about books and journals, microfiche and card catalogs. The libraries of the future will deal with the business of information management. They are becoming centers for community research and civic engagement. New College of Florida is poised to engage and enhance the digital assets at the Jane Bancroft Cook Library, a joint-use facility for New College of Florida, the University of South Florida Sarasota/Manatee, Manatee Community College, and citizens in the Manatee and Sarasota communities. The Cook Library/Smart Library plan will include:

Creating a variety of digital collections open to students, faculty, staff, and the community;

Acquiring basic sets of digital images to enrich the curriculum (environmental studies, art history, music, history, anthropology, biology, math, physics, business, education, criminal justice, etc.) and for use in educational and community outreach;

Purchasing equipment to digitize, analyze, and archive images and video created for research and teaching purposes;

Managing a full complement of digital assets, including audio, video, internet and metadata;

Developing educational, public outreach programs and facilitating public forums;

Providing a variety of workstation (PC, Mac) to allow for ease of access by faculty/students/staff/public;

Establishing Smart Collaborative Spaces where groups can interact using the best technology available.

Located on the Sarasota-Manatee county border, Cook Library is strategically placed to be an information hub for all the higher education institutions and the citizens of the counties they serve.

TRIBUTE TO VINCENT FEMIA

HON. MICHAEL A. ARCURI

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Mr. ARCURI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Vincent Femia—a resident of my district in Upstate New York—for his outstanding achievements at the 2009 Special Olympic Winter World Games held in Boise, Idaho. Vincent played an integral role in helping Team USA capture a gold medal during the 4x1K freestyle cross-country relay. He also earned a silver medal for his performance in the 7.5K freestyle cross-country race, and a bronze medal in the 5K cross-country race.

At only 24 years old, Vincent has a long and distinguished history of participation in the Special Olympics, earning eight gold medals in Nordic skiing over the past 15 years. Since first taking to the slopes at the age of five, Vincent's stamina and strength have earned him the nickname, The Machine.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to honor Vincent's accomplishments in the Special Olympic Games, and look forward to tracking his future success. Please join me in congratulating Vincent on this occasion.

IN HONOR OF SOHEM ALEICHEM
AND TO CONGRATULATE
LIMMUND FSU

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember and honor the life of acclaimed Russian-Jewish writer and humorist Mr. Sholem Aleichem, whose 150th birthday was this past Monday, March 2, and to congratulate Limmund FSU on the events it is sponsoring this week in New York City, Tel Aviv, and Kiev to commemorate this momentous event.

Born as Sholem Rabinovitch on March 2, 1859 in Pereyaslav, Ukraine, Sholem

Aleichem showed his writing talents at a young age. In 1879, he began publishing stories in Hebrew. Just a few years later, in 1883, he began publishing stories in Yiddish and, because Yiddish was not considered by some appropriate for legitimate writing, he adopted his now famous pseudonym: Sholem Aleichem.

This was the beginning of a long and distinguished literary career, in which Sholem Aleichem wrote and published dozens of short stories, plays, and novels in Yiddish, Hebrew, and Russian. He is best known for his writing in Yiddish and his role as one of the pre-eminent Yiddish authors. His efforts, through his own works and his promotion of the writing of others, did as much as anyone to promote Yiddish as an art form.

His works were widely popular, as they were both meaningful and humorous with an ability to teach and entertain. They also reflected the real lives and problems of their readers. Through his work, Sholem Aleichem left behind a rich portrayal of Jewish life and culture in Eastern Europe and Russia at the turn of the century. In fact, it was his stories that were the inspiration for the popular musical, *Fiddler on the Roof*. It is no wonder that he became known as the "Jewish Mark Twain."

Well after his death in New York City in 1916, his popularity continues to this day. His timeless works have been translated into many languages, including English, making accessible his unique literary talents to millions more. Monuments have been erected to him in Kiev and Moscow. And, in New York City, East 33rd Street, between Park Avenue and Madison Avenue, is named "Sholem Aleichem Place." It is only fitting that we pause on this, the occasion of his 150th birthday, to celebrate Sholem Aleichem and his contribution both to Jewish life and culture and to humanity as a whole.

Indeed, people will be remembering Sholem Aleichem all around the world thanks to the efforts of Limmund FSU. Limmund FSU is a volunteer organization whose goal is to help build bridges between Russian-speaking Jews and their Jewish history and culture. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate Limmund FSU on the events it is sponsoring this week to honor Sholem Aleichem. It could not have picked a better person to honor and I want to thank everyone involved for their tremendous efforts.

SUPPORTING THE JAMES A.
LOVELL FEDERAL HEALTH CARE
CENTER

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today I join my colleague from Illinois, Ms. BEAN, in introducing legislation to enhance the innovative health care resource sharing underway between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense in North Chicago, Illinois.

Ten years ago the VA was trying to close the North Chicago VA hospital, claiming it was underutilized and that veterans could easily commute 40 or 50 miles into Chicago for treatment. At the same time, the Navy was planning to close its 40-year-old hospital at Great